

In the Claims

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A communication hub comprising:

a control system configured to switch between either a configuration mode or an operation mode, wherein responsive to switching to the configuration mode the control system is configured to receive a registration request comprising an off-hook signal from an unauthorized communication device, ~~and~~ process the registration request to generate a query message for the unauthorized communication device that includes a request for a device identifier, and process a response message from the unauthorized communication device that includes the device identifier to automatically authorize the unauthorized communication device for use with the communication hub as a newly authorized communication device and to assign a virtual connection between the newly authorized communication device and a network system, and wherein responsive to switching to the operation mode the control system is configured to control an exchange of communications between a plurality of previously authorized communication devices, the newly authorized communication device, and ~~[[a]]~~ the network system;

a mode selection interface configured to receive an input from a user that selects either one of the configuration mode or the operation mode, and process the input to cause the control system to enter the selected one of the configuration mode or the operation mode; and

an interface system configured to receive the registration request and exchange the communications between the plurality of previously registered communication devices, the newly registered communication device, and ~~[[a]]~~ the network system.

2. (ORIGINAL) The communication hub of claim 1 wherein the control system is configured to generate a registration complete message for the newly authorized communication device, wherein the registration complete message causes the newly authorized communication device to indicate to the user that the newly authorized communication device is configured for use with the communication hub.

3. (ORIGINAL) The communication hub of claim 2 wherein the interface system is configured to provide the registration complete message to the newly authorized communication device.

4. (ORIGINAL) The communication hub of claim 1 wherein the control system is configured to cause the mode selection interface to indicate to the user that the newly authorized communication device is configured for use with the communication hub.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The communication hub of claim 1 wherein automatically authorizing the unauthorized communication device for use with the communication hub comprises:

recording the newly authorized communication device ~~in the~~ in the communication hub as an allowed communication device.

6. (CANCELED)

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The communication hub of claim ~~6~~ 1 wherein the interface system is configured to provide the query message to the unauthorized communication device and provide the response message to the control system.

8. (CANCELED)

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The communication hub of claim ~~6~~ 1 wherein the control system is configured to use the device identifier to identify communication requests made by the newly authorized communication device.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The communication hub of claim 1 wherein the newly authorized communication device is a wireless communication device.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The communication hub of claim 1 wherein the newly authorized communication device is a wireline communication device.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of operating a communication hub, the method comprising:

receiving an input from a user that indicates a desired one of either a configuration mode or an operation mode;

processing the input to switch to the desired one of the configuration mode or the operation mode;

in response to switching to the configuration mode, receiving a registration request comprising an off-hook signal from an unauthorized communication device;

in response to receiving the registration request, processing the registration request to generate a query message that includes a request for a device identifier for the unauthorized communication device;

processing a response message from the unauthorized communication device that includes the device identifier to automatically authorize the unauthorized communication device for use with the communication hub as a newly authorized communication device and to assign a virtual connection between the newly authorized communication device and a network system; and

in response to switching to the operation mode, exchanging communications between a plurality of authorized communication devices, the newly authorized communication device, and ~~[[a]]~~ the network system.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)The method of claim 12 the method further comprising:

indicating to the user that the newly authorized communication device is configured for use with the communication hub.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)The method of claim 13 wherein the step of indicating to the user comprises:

in response to automatically authorizing the unauthorized communication device, generating a registration complete message that causes the newly authorized communication device to indicate to the user that the newly authorized communication device is configured for use with the communication hub; and

providing the registration complete message to the communication device.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)The method of claim 13 wherein the step of indicating to the user comprises:

in the communication hub, displaying a message for the user that indicates to the user that the newly authorized communication device is authorized for use with the communication hub.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)The method of claim 12 wherein automatically registering the unauthorized communication device comprises:

recording the newly authorized communication device in the communication hub as an authorized communication device.

17. -18. (CANCELED)

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)The method of claim 47 12 the method further comprising:

using the device identifier to identify communication service requests from the newly authorized communication device.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)The method of claim 12 wherein the newly authorized communication device is a wireless communication device.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 12 wherein the newly authorized communication device is a wireline communication device.

22. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A software product comprising:

control system software operational when executed ~~on~~ by a processor to switch between either a configuration mode or an operation mode, wherein responsive to switching to the configuration mode the control system is configured to receive a registration request comprising an off-hook signal from an unauthorized communication device, ~~and~~ process the registration request to generate a query message for the unauthorized communication device that includes a request for a device identifier, and process a response message from the unauthorized communication device that includes the device identifier to automatically authorize the communication device for use with the communication hub as a newly authorized communication device and to assign a virtual connection between the newly authorized communication device and a network system, and wherein responsive to switching to the operation mode the control system is configured to control an exchange of communications between a plurality of previously authorized communication devices, the newly authorized communication device, and [[a]] the network system;

mode selection interface software operational when executed by the processor to receive an input from a user that selects one of either the configuration mode or the operation mode, and process the input to cause the control system to enter the selected one of the configuration mode or the operation mode; ~~and~~

interface system software operational when executed by the processor to receive the registration request, provide the query message to the unauthorized communication device, provide the response message to the control system and exchange the communications between the plurality of previously registered communication devices, the newly registered communication device, and [[a]] the network system; and

a software storage medium operational to store the control system software, the mode selection interface software and the interface system software.

23. (ORIGINAL) The product of claim 22 wherein the control system software is operational to generate a registration complete message for the newly authorized communication device, wherein the registration complete message causes the newly authorized communication device to indicate to the user that the newly authorized communication device is configured for use with the communication hub.

24. (ORIGINAL) The product of claim 23 wherein the interface system software is operational to provide the registration complete message to the newly authorized communication device.

25. (ORIGINAL) The product of claim 22 wherein the control system software is operational to cause the mode selection interface to indicate to the user that the newly authorized communication device is configured for use with the communication hub.

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)The product of claim 22 wherein the control system software is operational to record the newly authorized communication device ~~in the~~ in the communication hub as an allowed communication device.

27. – 29. (CANCELED)

30. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)The product of claim ~~27~~ 22 wherein the control system software is operational to use the device identifier to identify communication requests made by the newly authorized communication device.

31. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)The product of claim 22 wherein the newly authorized communication device is a wireless communication device.

32. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)The product of claim 22 wherein the newly authorized communication device is a wireline communication device.